

CONSTITUTION OF A CHURCH OF THE BEIJING INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP (“BICF”)

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DEFINITIONS

BICF	Abbreviation for Beijing International Christian Fellowship, an umbrella body comprised of member churches.
BICF Church	A single church that adopts the name and/or services of the Beijing International Christian Fellowship and is governed by a Church Leadership Team. It maintains a direct relationship with the BICF Council.
Church Leadership Team	Refers to the body responsible for a BICF Church. (See Article 6)
Church Leader	Refers to the leader of a Church Leadership Team. (See Article 6.1)
BICF Council	Refers to the body responsible for the umbrella body of BICF.
BICF Church Congregation	A congregation is a group of believers within a BICF Church that meet together as a single unit but is under the authority of the BICF Church Leadership team. It does not maintain a direct relationship with the BICF Council.

ARTICLE 1 - NAME

The full name of a BICF Church will include the title Beijing International Christian Fellowship. For example, “Beijing International Christian Fellowship – {Name of Church}” or “{Name of Church} – Beijing International Christian Fellowship”. For brevity, a BICF Church may freely use abbreviated versions of its full name that do not include BICF. The BICF is a non-affiliated, inter-denominational, Bible-based Christian fellowship.

ARTICLE 2 - PURPOSE

The mission of a BICF Church is to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and to teach people to obey all the commandments given to humankind by Jesus Christ.

The vision of a BICF Church is to build a vibrant, reproducing community unified in Christ that embraces and transforms people of all nations to impact their cities, their nations and the world for Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE 3 - DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

3.1 God

We believe there is one God, existing eternally in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and possessing the same attributes and perfections (Genesis 1:1, Deuteronomy 6:4, Matthew 28:19, John 10:30, 2 Corinthians 13:14).

3.2 Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is God (John 10:33). We believe in: His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:17, Matthew 1:23, Luke 1:34-35); His sinless life (Hebrews 4:15, 7:26); His miracles (John 2:11); His vicarious and atoning death (1 Corinthians 15:3, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 2:9); His resurrection (John 11:25, 1 Corinthians 15:4); His ascension to the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19); His personal return to earth in power and glory (Acts 1:11, Revelation 19:11-16).

3.3 The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, dwells in every true believer (1 Corinthians 3:16, 2 Corinthians 6:16-17). We believe that the Holy Spirit seals and dwells in every believer, spiritually uniting them with one another (Ephesians 1:13, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9, Galatians 3:26-28). We believe the Holy Spirit enables the trusting, obedient believer to live a godly life (Romans 8:13-14, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19-20,

Ephesians 4:30, 5:18) and continues to endow believers with gifts for the purpose of building up the body, for the common good, just as He wills (1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

3.4 The Scriptures

We believe the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God, without error and infallible in the original manuscripts. We believe the Bible is the final authority in faith and life (2 Timothy 3:15-17, 2 Peter 1:20, Psalm 19:7-9).

3.5 The Condition of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, in innocence, and without sin. In Adam's sin humanity fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became spiritually dead and alienated from God. We believe that, within himself, man is incapable of redeeming himself from his lost and depraved condition (Genesis 1:26, 3:1-24, Romans 3:10-18, 5:12, Ephesians 2:1-3).

3.6 The Work of Christ

We believe that God's eternal Son, Jesus Christ, became man, without ceasing to be God, in order to reveal God and redeem sinful man. We believe Christ voluntarily offered Himself as our sacrificial substitute on the cross, satisfying God's righteous judgment against sin. We believe God's only provision for our sin is Christ's death on our behalf, through which God reconciles us to Himself (John 14:6, Acts 4:12, 2 Corinthians 5:21). We believe Jesus is the way and the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father except through Jesus (John 14:6).

3.7 Salvation

We believe that salvation from the penalty of sin is a gift of God's grace, cannot be gained by any work, and is provided on the single ground of trust in Christ's work on the cross. All who trust Christ in this way are forgiven of their sins and born into God's family by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:16-19, Romans 3:23, 5:1-9, Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5).

3.8 The Church

We believe that the church, called in Scripture the Body of Christ, is a spiritual organism and that every true believer is a member of His Body. We also believe that Scripture affirms the establishment and continuation of local churches, groups of Christian believers called together for worship, instruction, fellowship and service (Ephesians 1:22-23, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Acts 2:42, 13:1).

3.9 Eternal State

We believe that at the moment of death, the souls of all who trust in Christ for salvation immediately enter Christ's presence, awaiting the resurrection of life. We believe that at death the souls of all who do not trust Christ for salvation immediately enter into conscious separation from God, awaiting the resurrection of condemnation, the eternal consequence of unbelief (Luke 16:19-26, 2 Corinthians 5:8, Philippians 1:23, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, Revelation 20:11-15).

ARTICLE 4 - CORE BIBLICAL VALUES

The church prayerfully seeks to cultivate within its fellowship the following Biblical values, evident in healthy, maturing churches worldwide.

4.1 God-centered, Passionate Spirituality

The deepest need in every believer's heart is to 'behold the beauty of the Lord,' and experience His life-giving presence. Only God can satisfy. We therefore seek to be God-centered, not man-centered, consistently seeking

through all its programs to gain a deeper understanding of God, love for God and experience of God. We believe God is most glorified in us when we are most deeply satisfied in Him (Mark 12:29-31).

4.2 Relationship Oriented

We seek to cultivate a culture of genuine Christian love among its members, through providing instruction in methods of demonstrating love, and facilitating ministries that achieve this.

4.3 Unified in Christ

We seek to be a visible expression of the multicultural diversity in God's Kingdom. We therefore seek unity in our multicultural diversity, appointing spiritually mature, gifted individuals from many cultures to visible positions of service and ministry leadership.

4.4 Mission Focused

It is the responsibility of every individual follower of Jesus Christ and of the body of Christ that makes up a local church to share the truth and love of Jesus Christ with those in our families, neighborhoods, cities, countries and to those in every nation in the world. We seek to embrace, instruct and transform individuals from all nations who are in its fellowship to be equipped to teach, train and make disciples in their own nations. We also seek to teach, train, send out and support those who are called to make disciples in nations other than their own (Acts 1:8).

4.5 Reproducing

Every follower of Jesus Christ has a unique, God-given calling and gifting and that each person is responsible to discern their calling and use their gifts in obedience in the building up of the body of Christ for the expansion of the Kingdom of God. We further believe that all followers of Jesus Christ are called to make disciples and bear fruit. We therefore seeks to provide an environment and a culture whereby believers are given opportunities to use the resources of the church to fulfill their calling, express their gifts and exercise their passions for ministry and to build up and train others who will do the same (Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Timothy 2:2).

4.6 Catalytic

Due to its location and external restrictions the church is uniquely situated to cope with its composition of believers from dozens of cultures, countries and denominational backgrounds. We therefore seeks to create and/or provide opportunities for ministry for individuals and/or organizations that could not normally occur outside the networking of the BICF (Matthew 5:14).

ARTICLE 5 - MEMBERSHIP

The church offers membership to those who have experienced the new birth, been baptized, who uphold the Constitution, agree with the Doctrinal Statement, commit to the Covenant of Fellowship, the Core Biblical Values and who desire to affiliate with the church. This Membership does not require termination of membership at the applicant's home church. After approval by the Church Leadership Team, applicants shall be added to the Church Membership Roll.

Membership expires after a period of time set by the Church Leadership Team. Individuals who do not renew their membership prior to its expiration will be considered to have withdrawn from Membership.

5.1 Covenant of Fellowship

Members affirm commitment to the following, to be expressed through affiliation with the church:

- To Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord;

- To seeking Him through a life of faith, and to obedience to the teaching of Scripture;
- To the Doctrinal Statement of the church;
- To attending church meetings as diligently as possible;
- To seeking a knowledge of their spiritual gift(s) and expressing them through one of the ministries of the church;
- To participation in a small group, as family and other priorities permit;
- To relating graciously and lovingly to other members, preserving the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; and
- To supporting the church in prayer, and through systematic, proportionate giving as God supplies and directs.

5.2 Members Meetings

The church will hold a Members Meeting at least every 6 months. During this meeting the Church Leadership Team will provide an update on ministry progress, direction for the coming six months, statement of finances, the current leadership team and other necessary information. The meeting will be led by a member of the Church Leadership Team who is not the Church Leader or paid staff.

5.3 Termination of Membership

Membership may be terminated only as follows:

- Death of the member;
- Change of view by the member regarding the BICF Constitution, Doctrinal Statement, the Core Biblical Values or failure to fulfill the obligations of the Covenant of Fellowship;
- Withdrawal from Membership by the member;
- Extended absence of the member without cause;
- Termination of Membership by the Church Leadership Team; or
- Failure to renew Membership as required.

Members in good standing who leave the church shall be given, upon request, a letter of recommendation affirming their faithfulness in serving the Lord through the church.

5.4 Discipline

To maintain the peace and purity of the church, the Scripture permits the removal of any person for disciplinary reasons (Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:1- 13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; 2 Timothy 2:16-21). When a Member engages in conduct that in the opinion of the Church Leadership Team is detrimental to the unity, peace, purity or ministry of the BICF, the Church Leadership Team will appoint appropriate individuals to counsel, and if necessary correct the individual (Matthew 18:15-16; Galatians 6:1).

If reasonable attempts toward reconciliation or restoration are unsuccessful, charges shall be submitted to the Church Leadership Team in writing. The accused person shall be notified of the charges and, if he desires to respond, he shall be given opportunity to respond to the Church Leadership Team. He shall be notified of the meeting at least one week in advance of the meeting date.

Removal or any other form of discipline shall require a three-fourths majority vote of the Church Leadership Team after careful and prayerful consideration. A person who has been removed from membership but who demonstrates a genuine attitude of repentance may be restored to membership consistent with the regulations governing the reception of new members.

ARTICLE 6 – GOVERNMENT

The government of the Church, under the leadership of Jesus Christ, is vested in the Church Leadership Team as defined below.

A Church Leadership Team will be comprised of not less than the following. The number of individuals serving in a role may be increased as needed.

Role	Responsibility
Church Leader	Accountable for the decisions and actions of the Church Leadership Team
Elder	Spiritual check-and-balance. Church < 50 at least 1. Church < 200 at least 2. Church >= 200 at least 3.
Deacons	Member representation. Church < 50 at least 1. Church < 200 at least 2. Church >= 200 at least 3.
Treasurer	Financial check-and-balance. Must be one of the existing Deacons and must not be one of the Elders. Must not be paid.
Operations Manager	Executorial check-and-balance. Ensures governance executed as expected.

The following must be observed when deciding the makeup of the church leadership team:

- The number of paid elders should not exceed the number of non-paid elders.
- The number of paid members on the church leadership team should not exceed the number of non-paid members on the church leadership team.

A Church Leadership Team will be entirely responsible for the spiritual well-being and governance of its BICF Church Congregations.

6.1 Church Leader

6.1.1 Qualifications

The Church Leader shall meet the same qualifications as a Church Elder (see Article 6.2.1), as well as the following:

- The church leader demonstrates a clear call to Christian ministry evident to the church.
- The church leader has attained the education and training needed to fulfill their call.
- The church leader has experience in the duties essential to successful pastoral ministry.
- The church leader possesses a reputation that is above reproach in the church and community.
- The church leader exhibits character befitting a church leader that brings glory to God and honor to the church.
- The church leader holds doctrinal beliefs consistent with the historic tenets of the Christian faith and the BICF.
- The church leader has demonstrated fruitfulness in Christian service.

6.1.2 Nomination

A new Church Leader is nominated by a Church Leadership Team in accordance with standards established by the BICF Council as described by the procedures in Article 6.7.1.

6.1.3 Term of Office

A Church Leader shall be elected by the Church Leadership Team to serve a two-year term. A Church Leader may serve an unlimited number of terms.

A church leader's term may be renewed or not renewed by action of the Leadership Team.

6.1.4 Duties

The Church Leader bears responsibility for (but is not limited to) the following duties:

- The duties of a Church Elder.
- The person identified as responsible to lead the church in all its endeavors, provide guidance, oversight and to exercise Biblical authority in his ministry as Christ's under-shepherd in accordance with the provisions of this document;
- The Church Leader serves as the church's Pastor-Teacher;
- Accountable for the actions and decisions of the Church Leadership Team and the Church;
- The Church Leader shall pursue spiritual, personal and ministry growth and development by engaging in the disciplines of prayer, study, entering a mentoring relationship or by other means.
- The Church leader shall regularly participate in events organized by the BICF Council that bring BICF Churches and leaders together for networking, leadership development, prayer and fellowship.

6.1.5 Limitations

A Church Leader has the same limitations as a Church Elder.

6.1.6 Removal

Removal of a Church Leader will follow the procedure prescribed in Article 6.2.6. If the Church Leadership Team is unable to reach consensus it will request arbitration from the BICF Council according to Article 6.7.3.

6.2 Church Elders

6.2.1 Qualifications

The qualifications for a Church Elder are those described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. In addition to meeting these qualifications, each nominee must be a male member and must be able to affirm without reservation to the church Constitution, Doctrinal Statement, Core Biblical Values, and Covenant of Fellowship.

6.2.2 Nomination

Nominations for new Church Elders shall be made by members of the church at a members' meeting or as called for by the elders. All nominations for a Church shall be approved by the Church Leadership Team by a three-fourths vote.

6.2.3 Term of Office

Church Elders shall be elected by the Church Leadership Team to serve a two-year term. A Church Elder may serve for three consecutive terms. After three consecutive terms, a Church Elder shall step down from the Church Leadership Team for at least one year, after which time they may be nominated and serve.

An Elder's term may be renewed or not renewed by action of the Leadership Team. That action will be reported at the next Members' meeting

Should a vacancy occur the Church Leadership Team shall appoint a qualified person to fulfill the unexpired term. That person may serve three consecutive terms in addition to the unexpired term and may be renewed.

6.2.4 Duties

The Church Elders bear responsibility for (but are not limited to) the following duties:

- Oversee the appointment of the respective Church Leader in accordance with standards established by and with the approval of BICF Council.
- Attend primarily to the spiritual needs of the church
- Shepherd and nurture the BICF Church spiritually, guard the purity of its teaching and practice, and discipline the Church consistent with the teaching of Scripture.
- To start new BICF Churches as the Church Leadership Team deems necessary, appropriate, or convenient to the purpose in accordance with the guidelines found in item 6.7.5 Creation of a new BICF Church or Congregation.
- To start new BICF Church Congregations as the Church Leadership deems necessary, appropriate, or convenient to the purpose in accordance with the guidelines found in item 6.7.5 Creation of a new BICF Church or Congregation.
- Establish and oversee the main areas of ministry consistent with their individual gifts and experience.
- Administer the Lord's Supper and Baptism and act for the Church in the reception and dismissal of Members.
- Pray; counsel the needy; comfort the suffering and bereaved; visit the sick; teach as needed; visit new members; counsel those couples who are engaged, married or divorcing; and provide other acts of care or mercy as needed.

6.2.5 Limitations

The Church Elders may not assume any of the following prerogatives without approval by the Church Leadership Team:

- Adopt an annual budget;
- Purchase, lease, sell or mortgage real estate property;
- Hire pastoral or non-pastoral staff apart from a three-fourths majority vote of the Church Leadership Team;
- Purchase non-budgeted supplies, materials, or equipment totaling more than RMB 30,000 per purchase;
- Incur expenses for the church exceeding the annual budgeted revenue of the church;

6.2.6 Termination

A Church Elder may be removed from service as an Elder only as follows:

- Death;
- Resignation;
- Refusal to fulfill the responsibilities designated in this Constitution, and so declared by a majority present at a duly called meeting of the Elders;
- Repeated absence: Absent from the Church Sunday services for a period of four consecutive Sundays without prior notice or acceptable reasons given to the Elders; or
- Removal by a three-fourths vote of the Church Leadership Team, if showing himself in attitude or behavior to be disturbing the purity, peace or unity of the Church, has admitted changing his views regarding the Doctrinal Statement, or fails to live in harmony with the standards expressed in the Covenant of Fellowship or Constitution.

In the case that the removal of an Elder is under consideration, the BICF Council must be notified in writing by the Church Leadership Team. The Elder to be removed may request in writing from the Church Leadership Team

that the BICF Council be included as an arbitrator. The Church Leadership Team is required to inform the Elder of their right to arbitration and appeal. In this case the BICF Council Arbitration procedures listed in section 6.7.3 should be followed.

6.3 Church Deacons

6.3.1 Qualifications

The qualifications for a Deacon are those described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. In addition, each Deacon nominee must be a Member, able to affirm without reservation to the Constitution, Doctrinal Statement, Core Biblical Values, and Covenant of Fellowship and have demonstrated faithfulness to the Covenant of Fellowship through involvement in a ministry of the Church.

6.3.2 Nominations

Nomination for Church Deacons shall be made by the Members at members' meetings or the call of the Leadership Team. All nominations for Church Deacons shall be approved by the Church Leadership Team by a three-fourths vote.

6.3.3 Term of Office

Deacons shall be elected by the Church Leadership Team to serve for a two-year term, and may serve for three consecutive terms. After three consecutive terms, a Deacon shall step down from the Church Leadership Team for a period of at least one year, after which the person may again be eligible for nomination as a Deacon. A Deacon's term may be renewed or not renewed by action of the Leadership Team. That action will be reported at the next Members' meeting.

Should a vacancy occur the Church Leadership Team shall appoint a qualified person to fulfill the unexpired term. That person may serve three consecutive terms in addition to the unexpired term and may be renewed.

6.3.4 Duties

The Church Deacons shall be responsible for the practical care and mercy needs of the respective church. They shall:

- Hold themselves in readiness to assist in the physical needs of the church and short-term project needs of the Church Leadership Team, and perform all duties with diligence and excellence;
- Provide regular feedback to the Church Leadership Team regarding the overall spiritual health, and direction of the Church;
- Voice the spiritual and physical needs of the congregation and Members to the Church Leadership Team;
- The Church Deacons are strongly encouraged to assist with the collection of offerings and the administration of the Lord's Supper.

6.3.5 Removal

A Deacon may be removed from service as a Deacon only as follows:

- Death;
- Resignation;
- Refusal to fulfill the responsibilities designated in this Constitution, and so declared by a majority present and voting at a duly called meeting of the Elders;
- Absent from the Church Sunday services for a period of four consecutive Sundays without prior notice or acceptable reasons given to the Church Leadership Team; or
- Removal by a three-fourths vote of the Church Leadership Team, if showing an attitude or behavior to be disturbing the purity, peace or unity of the Church, has admitted changing his views regarding the

Doctrinal Statement or fails to live in harmony with the standards expressed in the Covenant of Fellowship or the Constitution. Any Church Leadership Member who cannot attend a meeting in which such termination is discussed shall submit his vote in writing. However, such absent voting shall not be counted in determining a quorum.

In the case that the removal of a Deacon is under consideration the BICF Council must be notified in writing by the Church Leadership Team. The Deacon to be removed may request in writing from the Church Leadership Team that the BICF Council be included as an arbitrator. The Leadership Team is required to inform the Deacon of their right to arbitration and appeal. In this case the BICF Council Arbitration procedures listed in section 6.7.3 should be followed.

6.4 Church Treasurer

The Church treasurer shall be a member of the Church Leadership Team and shall be elected to serve a two-year term, by a three-fourths majority vote at its first regular meeting of the Church Year.

The Treasurer shall be:

- A non-paid member of the church;
- A member of the Church Leadership team. If, at the Leadership Team’s discretion, a person other than a leadership team member is appointed to this position, they shall meet all other qualifications, attend all Leadership Team meetings, speak to issues but may not vote and are not counted in the quorum.
- An Elder or a Deacon;
- Must not be the Church Leader or the Church Leader’s family;
- Have no financial holdings related to church (e.g. no accounts held in their name);
- Responsible for preparing the Church budget;
- Responsible for safeguarding the church's finances and ensuring responsible financial management practices;
- Providing regular financial updates to the Church Leadership Team;
- Providing semi-annual reports to the Members and other reports as requested by the Church Leadership Team;

6.4.1 Financial Principles

The treasurer will be responsible that a Church operates in accordance with the following financial procedures:

- A Church shall seek to maintain a balanced budget.
- The Church Leadership Team shall review and approve the Church budget annually by a three-fourths vote.
- A Church shall not purchase an asset valued more than 30000USD, including real estate without approval from the BICF Council (see Section 6.7.9)
- A Church will handle its finances in accordance with the BICF Church Financial Policies.

6.4.2 Financial Reporting

The Treasure will be responsible for preparing and presenting the following documents:

Report	Required Items
Semi-Annual Financial Report presented	Income and Expenditure for the past financial period, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line items aggregated to > 2% of total budget AND greater than 30,000RMB. • Cash ratio

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating balance • Contributions of > 10,000RMB to external organizations
Annual Budget	Budget approved for the upcoming financial year, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line items aggregated to > 2% of total budget AND greater than 30,000RMB. • Contributions of > 10,000RMB to external organizations
Annual Financial Principles Sign-off	Sign-off statement from treasurer that the Church has been operating under the financial principles listed in Article 6.4.1 for the past financial year.
Annual Compensation Review	An annual document should be submitted to the BICF council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The members of the compensation review committee • The proposed salaries for each staff member Any considerations used in determining salary adjustments

The reports will be made available to the Church Leadership Team, the BICF Council, and presented in confidence at Members Meetings (except for Annual Compensation Review).

6.4.3 Annual Compensation Review

The Treasurer is responsible for leading the annual compensation review committee.

Prior to meeting, the Treasurer must:

- Require that the BICF Council conducts an annual church leader discussion (section 6.7.7) with the church leader. The feedback from this discussion must be considered by the annual compensation review committee when determining the church leader salary.
- Require the church leader provide recommendations for salary adjustments for staff members.

The compensation review committee:

- Must include all non-paid members of the church leadership team;
- Must NOT include paid members of the church leadership team;
- Optionally can include non-paid members of the church with agreement of the church leadership team;
- Must consist of at least 3 people;
- Must propose and approve the salary for the church leader. This should be determined taking into consideration at least: (i) annual church leader discussion feedback from the BICF council, (ii) the leading of the Holy Spirit, (iii) results of the church against the annual church goals.
- Must review and approve the salary for the church staff members apart from the church leader. This should be determined taking into consideration at least: (i) the salary recommendations from the church leader, (ii) the leading of the Holy Spirit.

The decisions of the annual compensation review committee must be documented in an annual compensation review document and submitted to the BICF Council for the purpose of transparency.

6.5 Church Operations Manager

The Church Operations Manager shall be a member of the Church Leadership Team and shall be elected to serve a two-year term, by a three-fourths majority vote at its first regular meeting of the Church Year.

The Church Operations Manager shall be:

- A member of the Church Leadership Team. If, at the Leadership Team’s discretion, a person other than a leadership team member is appointed to this position, they shall meet all other qualifications, attend all Leadership Team meetings, speak to issues but may not vote and are not counted in the quorum.
- An Elder or a Deacon;
- Responsible to ensure all activities of the Church Leadership Team are in accordance with this document, including abiding by all governance requirements;
- Responsible to ensure a calendar of organizational events is created each year that includes Budget approval, Members meetings and regular Church Leadership Team meetings;
- Responsible to provide to the BICF Council with the reports-outlined in Article 6.7.8;
- Responsible to encourage the Church Leadership Team to document and evaluate quarterly goals, highlights and lowlights;

6.6 Decision Making

The following decisions must be passed by the Church Leadership Team by a three-fourth vote

- Appoint a new Church Leader
- Appoint new Elders or Deacons to the Church Leadership Team;
- Adopt an annual budget;
- Purchase, lease, sell or mortgage real estate property;
- Hire pastoral or non-pastoral staff;
- Purchase non-budgeted supplies, materials, or equipment totaling more than RMB 30,000 per purchase;
- Incur expenses for the church exceeding the annual budgeted revenue of the church;

Absentee votes must be submitted-in writing to a member of the Church Leadership Team prior to any vote and will not be considered in forming a quorum. The votes of all absentees must be presented at the time of the vote. If not the vote must be deferred.

The results of such votes must be submitted in writing to the BICF Council and must be presented at the next Members meeting.

6.7 Interactions with the BICF Council

The Church is empowered to make decisions and is held accountable for those decisions by the BICF Council. The Church agrees to the following interactions with the BICF Council to ensure transparency, accountability and good stewardship:

6.7.1 Appointment of a Church Leader

A new Church Leader must have already been approved by the Church Leadership Team as an Elder according to the procedures in Article 6.2.2.

The BICF Council will approve a Church Leader after careful and prayerful consideration through a process defined by the BICF Council Constitution.

6.7.3 Arbitration in Inter-Church Disputes and Church Leader Disputes

The BICF Council will have the responsibility to trigger and act as the arbitrator in the following cases:

- Inter-Church disputes – The BICF Council is responsible to intervene and act as an arbitrator when a dispute between BICF Churches occurs. The arbitration process can be triggered upon request of a Church Leadership Team member, or as per the decision of the BICF Council.
- Church Leader – The BICF Council is responsible to intervene and arbitrate when a church leader has, or is accused of having violated the Constitution, Doctrinal Statement, Core Biblical Values, Covenant of Fellowship, or Biblical responsibilities and standards of ethical or morale conduct not covered by above. Such action should lead to restoration, refuse to take actions that are solely punitive, and duly consider the needs of the leader’s family and church. When repentance, restoration and reconciliation are refused, the BICF Council will have the right and responsibility to remove the church leader.
- Arbitration-can be requested by a Church Leadership Team, a member of that team or the Church Leader. The BICF Council, and each involved party will appoint their designated representative. All designated representatives are required to work together in a God honoring fashion to seek a mutually satisfactory and Biblical solution.
- In the case that a mutual solution cannot be reached, the final decision will be made by the designated representative of the BICF Council.
- The church leader’s refusal to submit to arbitration automatically results in removal.

6.7.4 Church-in-Crisis

At times churches are unable to function in a healthy and Biblical manner. Such circumstances may include; a new church plant, small church that cannot provide qualified elders, church leader transition, financial crisis, un-reconciled disputes, and others.

Upon request from the Church Leadership Team, or a delegation from the church in the absence of a functioning Leadership Team, the BICF Council will be responsible to provide necessary assistance in cooperation with a BICF Church Leadership Team to restore the church to healthy function and full autonomy.

Other BICF Churches recognize their obligation as the family of God to render any and all assistance to the church-in-crisis. This may include honoring requests from the BICF Council for personnel, finances and other resources essential to the goal.

6.7.5 Creation of a new BICF Church or BICF Church Congregation

A church that chooses to adopt the status as a BICF Church must submit its intention to the BICF Council in writing. The BICF Council will require the BICF Church to abide by this Constitution. The new BICF Church must have its own Church Leadership Team and will maintain a direct relationship with the BICF Council. The BICF Council will approve the new church using the process described in the BICF Council Constitution.

A BICF Church must notify the BICF Council in writing when it creates a new BICF Church Congregation. The new BICF Church Congregation will be under the authority of the Church Leadership Team that created it and is not required to maintain a direct relationship with the BICF Council.

6.7.6 Revocation of BICF Church status

In the event where a Church Leader, Church Leadership Team or Church as a whole is believed to have continually violate any of the Constitution, Doctrinal Statement, Core Biblical Values, or Covenant of Fellowship, for a period of three months or more the BICF Council will:

- Submit in writing to the Church Leader and the Church Leadership Team the details of the alleged violations;

- Coordinate a meeting of designated representatives of the BICF Council and the BICF Church to discuss the alleged violations with a goal to resolve any concerns, bring restoration, refuse actions that are solely punitive and duly consider the needs of the Church Leadership Team, their families and the Church.

When repentance, restoration and reconciliation are refused, the BICF Council will have the right and responsibility to remove the church from the BICF.

Removal means that a BICF Church will:

- No longer use the name of Beijing International Christian Fellowship or BICF;
- No longer be able to access any support services provided by the BICF Council;

6.7.7 Church Leader Annual Discussion

To ensure appropriate accountability and spiritual health of a Church and Church Leader, the BICF Council or their designee will initiate an annual discussion with a church leader to determine if the Church Leader and the Church remain in compliance with the BICF Constitution, Doctrinal Statement, Core Biblical Values, or Covenant of Fellowship.

The results of this discussion will be used primarily to develop, grow, support and encourage the Church Leader rather than to punish, discipline, or condemn.

6.7.8 Reporting

A BICF Church will submit the following reports to the BICF Council for the purpose of transparency only.

A representative of the BICF Council will make the requests for these reports in writing. A Church must provide the appropriate information in a timely, transparent and quality fashion.

The set of reports include but are not restricted to:

- Brief church planning summaries including 3-month accomplishments, challenges and annual goals for the purpose of information sharing
- Minutes of Church Members Meetings for the purpose of transparency
- Annual Budget for the purpose of transparency
- Quarterly financial scorecard for the purpose of transparency
- Church Leadership Team member list for the purpose of transparency
- Leadership development activities that Church Leadership Team have attended or any active mentor relationships for the purpose of transparency and for creating greater awareness of leadership development needs amongst the BICF Council.
- Church survey results if available.

6.7.9 Approval for Restricted Actions

A BICF Church will seek approval from the BICF Council for the following:

- Creating a legal entity associated with the Church or the name BICF;
- Creating a legal relationship with another entity;
- Creating a bank account associated with the Church or the name BICF;
- Taking a loan associated with the Church or the name BICF;
- Purchasing an asset valued more than 30000USD, including real estate;

ARTICLE 7 – ORDINANCES

Baptism is one of the two ordinances instituted by Jesus Christ. Members are required to be baptized as an outward testimony of an inward spiritual transformation. It shall be administered only to those who give evidence of having been born again by faith in Jesus Christ. The mode of baptism shall be immersion unless otherwise requested.

The Lord's Supper shall be administered as a commemoration of His death, the elements used as symbols of His body and blood. It shall be open to all self-examined believers regardless of church affiliation, and shall be administered as frequently as the BICF Council shall determine.

ARTICLE 8 – ORDINATION

The Church shall have the authority to ordain qualified men and women to ministry service. Such individuals shall be ordained and given a commission to teach and administer the ordinances by an Ordination Team composed of the BICF Council and representative group of Pastors determined by the BICF Council. The Ordination Council shall thoroughly examine all applicants for ordination concerning their call to Christian ministry, education, Christian experience, reputation, character, doctrinal belief, and demonstrated fruitfulness in Christian service.

ARTICLE 9 - DEDICATION OF CHILDREN

When requested by parents, a BICF Church shall dedicate children to the Lord in a ceremony where the parents are commissioned to rear the children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

ARTICLE 10 – AMENDMENTS

This Constitution can only be amended by the BICF Council. A BICF Church cannot amend this constitution.